

SHOW ME THE MEASURE OF MY DAYS

CPC, 6/24/12

PSALM 39**INTRO**

What questions run through your soul? I know some of you have only one question on your minds this morning and that is, “Where is my sermon manuscript?”! Well, we’re going to do something a bit different this morning, and that is give you an opportunity to take notes on the sermon. The manuscript will be available on line by tomorrow morning so you can pick up any references or things you may have missed or even some material we won’t get to today.

So, I ask again, “What questions run through your soul.” Oh, I suspect most of us most of the time are too busy to have too many questions rattling around inside us. We get so caught up in the rat race of life that we don’t have time or energy to think about that rat race: we get up, shower, eat, go to work, come home, eat, pay the bills, get up again the next day, and on it goes. If we have any spare time at all, we try to carve out a little recreation for ourselves, and then Monday hits again and we’re back at it. We don’t take much time to think.

Then something happens: we lose our job, a parent dies, a child gets sick, a friend gets cancer, a relationship is broken, and everything slows down, and we start to ruminate. We may wonder about things like the purpose of life, the existence of evil, the prosperity of the wicked. We may ask questions like we’ve been considering from the Psalms this summer in our series “Honest to God”, questions like, “God, why do you hide yourself?” or “Why have you forsaken me?” And this is the beauty of the Psalms, that they are written out of real life situations, expressing deep, sometimes even raw, human emotions, putting into words things we feel but don’t know how to express or even if we’re allowed to.

And yet my guess is that many of us, probably too many of us, have not been particularly troubled by the issue that was vexing David in Ps. 39. Let’s look at it.

Notice the heading of Psalm, part of the inspired text, *“to the choirmaster: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.”* Jeduthun was one of the chief musicians appointed by David to lead public worship (1 Chr. 25:3), so this is kind of like a song written for Eric Anderson to lead us in singing. This isn’t the first psalm I would pick to sing as a congregation as there’s hardly any worship at all in it, and especially with the way it ends! But it’s interesting to me that Israel used to sing songs like this in their corporate worship. My guess is that this one had somewhat of a melancholy tune, maybe even some minor chords, as they poured out their souls together in music before the Lord.

I. THE ANGUISH RESTRAINED, vv. 1-3

There was something bothering David, eating away at him, he calls it in v. 2 “my distress”, or in the NASB “my sorrow” or in the NIV, “my anguish.” The word literally means

“pain”, either physical or mental, and it’s used, for instance, in Eze. 28:14 of “painful briars and sharp thorns.” Something was hurting David deeply, inside, like briars clawing at his soul.

Yet the first thing David says in the Psalm is, *“I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue; I will guard my mouth with a muzzle, as long as the wicked are in my presence.”* He wants to be careful how he verbalizes his inner struggle, because, as one commentator said (Kidner), his feelings were running high enough to be taken for disloyalty if he had vented them in the wrong company. His struggle was so great he couldn’t speak it without the threat of being misunderstood, so he makes a commitment not to voice his distress because evil people might misconstrue his questions.

Which raises the question: can’t we let God know how we’re feeling? I thought this was the point of this series, “Honest to God”! Yes God can handle our outbursts of emotion—but others may not be able to. And particularly those, the wicked, who are predisposed to think negatively of God in the first place. So the Psalmist put a muzzle over his mouth while he was around those people, so as not to be a stumbling block to them. There is a place to hold our tongue.

Yet the fire burns, the questions don’t go away, the distress grows worse, the pain, in Hebrew, is “excited.” [It’s like when you’ve eaten a big spicy meal and it just keeps gurgling and you know you’re not going to be able to keep it down, it’s burning and churning inside, then all of a sudden it erupts. He couldn’t hold it in any longer.] *As I mused, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue.* He finally opened his mouth, v. 4 and following, but notice when he does he does so in a careful and respectful way, so that he neither causes others to stumble nor profanes the name of his God. There is a difference between complaining to God and complaining against Him.

II. THE ANGUISH EXPLAINED, vv. 4-11

So what was it that was bothering David so much? It’s actually been a bit difficult for me to sort out, primarily because the points he raises don’t seem to cause most of us that much angst. It’s a bit like Job’s struggle, but not as profound, on a different level. Let’s look at the issues that are bothering David so that we can get at the heart of this Psalm and what God wants to teach us today. There are 3 main themes I see David intertwining in these verses as he explains his anguish.

a. Life is so fragile, vv. 4-6a

Show me the measure of my days, v. 4. He is not complaining, he wants to be instructed, to grow in wisdom. David asks God, “Let me know my end, literally when I will cease, and the limit of my days.” He is talking about his death, but he’s not asking God to let him know when he’s going to die, i.e. how many more days he has left to live. He says, show me how insignificant and fragile I am. He says, literally, “Let me know how lacking I am; my life

is as non-existence before you.” I want to see myself, he says, from your perspective, God, what do I look like compared to you, compared to eternity, because I want to understand how very small I am.

Look at the words and images David uses to describe his life: fleeting; a few handbreadths (3”); as nothing; a shadow; back in v. 5, a mere breath. This is an important word, the Hebrew word that David uses, *hebel*, is the same one that his son, Solomon, would choose for the theme of his book on the meaning of life, Ecclesiastes, where the word is used 73 times and is translated “vanity” or “meaninglessness” or “vapor” or “emptiness.” In fact the word is used 5 times in Eccl. 1:2 alone, “Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” It is a word that literally means “breath” or “light wind” and denotes, according to Barnes, what:

- (1) passes away more or less quickly and completely;
- (2) leaves either no result or no adequate result behind, and therefore
- (3) fails to satisfy the mind of man, which naturally craves for something permanent and significant.

His point is we live for a short time but nothing we do lasts, it is all washed away, like footprints on the seashore, so that when it’s done you don’t even know that it’s been there. And if you think about that very long, it leaves you feeling empty, like what are we accomplishing here anyway. Life is fragile; it has no real substance to it. It’s like the old farmhouse that used to sit just across Towne, there a long time, so it seemed, served a purpose, but one day a few weeks ago the wreckers came and the house was gone, seed was planted, and literally in just a few days you could never tell there had been a house there. That is a picture of our lives.

We don’t often think this way. In fact, life seems terribly long sometimes, like when you’re waiting at the 4-way stop out here to leave church; or when a book report or paper is due; or when you have toddlers who never seem to be ready for potty training, or when you have teenagers that stretching their wings and knocking you over, or when you’re going through chemo and you just want to go Home. . . And yet it’s important for us at times to extricate ourselves either from the rat race if life is whizzing by or from the marathon if life is dragging, and look back on it, like an astronaut looks back at planet earth to get a proper perspective on it. That’s exactly what David is asking, Lord show me the measure of my days, give me your perspective on how short my life is, help me to consider what a serious thing it is to die and how I can best live my life before that day.

The emperors of Constantinople, on their inauguration days, had a mason come and show them several marble stones and ask them to choose which of those should be made ready for their grave stones. That’s why Joseph of Arimathea, it is said, had his tomb in his garden, to check the pleasures of the place (Christopher Love in Spurgeon, p. 223).

Lest we get too caught up in the allusion of our own significance, Scripture is full of references to how short and ephemeral our lives are. Look at all these descriptions:

1 Chr. 29:15	Shadow
Job 4:19	Houses of clay
Job 7:6	Weaver's shuttle
Job 9:25	Runner
Ps. 49:12	Beasts
Ps. 78:39	Passing breeze
Ps. 90:5	Dream, swept away
Ps. 90:10	Soon are gone and we fly away
Ps. 144:4	Breath, passing shadow
Eccl. 3:20	Dust
Isa. 64:6	Leaf
James 1:10	Wild flower
James 4:14	Mist
1 Pet. 1:24	Grass

Do you get the picture? God is trying to get us to think, to understand how short our lives really are. This is why after both times he calls man a breath, v. 5 and v. 11, there is a "Selah", which indicates some kind of a musical interlude, a pause, a break for us to stop and think about what has just been sung. Aging video. Match illustration.

*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
 To the last syllable of recorded time;
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
 And then is heard no more; it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing. —William Shakespeare*

But even the Bard didn't quite get the whole picture. There is a tension here because we are made for significance, we are fundamentally different from the animals. Does Stubby worry about how he's spending his time as he waits for me to come home from work? No, but we're made in God's image to do something that will last. What might that be?

b. Money is so fleeting, vv. 6b, 11b

What does the world say about money? "When I was young I thought that money was the most important thing in life; now that I am old I know that it is." - Oscar Wilde
 "Money frees you from doing things you dislike. Since I dislike doing nearly everything, money is handy." - Groucho Marx

Listen to v. 6 in the NIV, *“Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro: He bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth, not knowing who will get it.”* Did you notice the word “in vain” again, or “for nothing?” That’s our Ecclesiastes word, *hebel*, same word as in vv. 5, 11. It’s such a remarkable picture, ridiculous really, phantoms going about to and fro gathering up mist. Everything they do, all they collect, is just a vapor. The leading employment of these shadows is bustling about, heaping up—and all for naught. It would be like going into your back yard on a misty morning and trying to collect the fog in a plastic bag. You work at it, you run around, but you’ve got nothing to show for it, nothing of substance when you’re done. And even if you do collect what seems to be something, you’re not going to be able to take it with you when you die anyway, you don’t know for sure who will get it after you and what they will do with it. So what’s the point?

It’s like the story Jesus told of the rich fool in Lk. 12, a man who had such a good crop that he had nowhere to store it, so he thought I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and then I’ll say to myself, *“You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and be merry.”* But God said to him, *“You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?”*

Money is like water, you can’t hold it in your hands, it slips right through. Like it says in Prov. 23:5, *“Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.”* It is like Edmund Burke said, “What shadows we are and what shadows do we pursue.”

David goes on in v. 11 to say *“You consume like a moth what is dear to him”*, or in the NIV, *“You consume their wealth like a moth.”* What do moths do? They eat holes in clothes and destroy them, literally consume them. That’s why when you’d go to grandma’s house and walk into her bedroom there would be kind of this weird smell, moth balls in the clothes to keep the moth larvae out. David is saying, as you accumulate wealth, moth larvae are being laid in with it and they will eat it up and destroy it. And as he thinks about this, David is deeply troubled in his soul. All he has worked for, all he has accumulated (and for him it was a lot) will be eaten up like a moth and disappear. Beauty, as Spurgeon said, must be a poor thing if a moth can consume it. “All our desires and delights are wretched moth-eaten things when the Lord visits us in His anger” (p. 218).

This is an issue his son, Solomon, reflected on too, *“I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me. And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the work into which I have poured my effort and skill under the sun. This too is meaningless.”* (Eccl. 2:18,19)

Our lives are fragile; money is fleeting. Our lives are too short of time and of guarantees to busy ourselves with piling up things. As Thomas Gray wrote in the 18th century,
*The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow’r,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave,
 Awaits alike th’inevitable hour:*

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Our lives, our money, are here for a moment; and then they're gone. . .

c. Sin is so foolish, vv. 7-11

It is not just that life is fragile and that money is fleeting, there is a third strand to this cord and I believe this is what is really aggravating David's soul. There is something more personal going on here. He says in v. 7, *"And now, O Lord, for what do I want? My hope is in you."* This is a turning point in the Psalm, in view of this futility what do I look for? There is only one prospect: my hope is in you. He realizes that if he is to make anything solid or lasting of his life he must connect with His Creator, the one who is forever, who cannot be shaken, who never changes. God who is solid, not a shadow; who is eternal, not temporal; who has real substance and is not just a phantom. The solution to life being fragile and money being fleeting is to enter into a personal relationship with the One who made and rules over it all.

And yet it is this relationship that has created a dilemma for him. Because this eternal being is not just some force or principle out there, He is very much a person--and one who has a moral core to Him. That's where the rub comes in. David has not always followed the principles, the laws laid down by His Creator. He speaks of his transgressions in v. 8, his iniquities, the things he has done wrong. And this is where things really started to get messed up. Because that's what sin does.

The wages of sin is death. But the good news is that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. So if you are willing to turn from your sin and put your faith in Jesus, you will receive the gift of eternal life. This is a beautiful thing. But does it mean that your ongoing sin no longer results in death? Look at David's experience, as a child of God. V. 9, it is you who have done it, v. 10, "remove your stroke from me; I am spent by the hostility of your hand." This is very strong language. He used the same word "stroke" in 38:11, for "wounds." It is the same word used in 2 Sam. 7:14, "flogging." It is the exact same word used of the plagues in Ex. 11:1 (also Gen. 12:17), to mean God using physical means, bodily pain, to get through to someone. It is hard, it hurts, but in David's case it is not **death**, it is **discipline** v. 11. Your blows have landed heavily on me, you have consumed my wealth, and I am spent, I am at the end of my tether, and I don't know if I can take it anymore.

David acknowledged that it was God who had struck him, and that is why in v. 9 he says, I am mute, I do not open my mouth, for it is you who have done it. Because the distress is God's doing, it is better not to argue with Him lest one's sin is increased by foolish accusations. Any man will find himself an unequal match for the Almighty. He realized his place, that God could have cast him upon a bed of flames for his sin instead of a bed of sickness. So he holds his tongue. We can't bear a blow from our equals, but a blow from our king we can well digest.

But what David didn't fully understand was God's purposes in the discipline. All he is able to say, in essence, is stop it, you're breaking me, and I can't handle it any more. He feels

the same way Moses did in Ps. 90: 7-9, *"We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. All our days pass away under your wrath: we finish our years with a moan."*

Neither David nor Moses were able to clarify what Solomon did in Prov. 3:11,12, which is picked up and expanded on by the author of Hebrews in 12:5-11, where he says be encouraged when you feel the sting of His whip, it's actually a sign that you're a child of God, because God cares too much about you to let you wander away down the destructive paths of sin. So He gets the paddle out, not because He doesn't love you but precisely because He does, and while that discipline is painful at the time, 12:11, it produces what God wants to see in us in the first place—a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

But David did want God's blows to stop, so his cry in this Psalm is for God to deliver him from his transgressions, things that were making even others laugh at him (v. 8). This is what God loves to do! *"Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of. . . His inheritance. You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea"* (Mic. 7:18, 19). It is because Christ has become sin for us who believe that in Him He can make us the righteousness of God, a request for which David prays but which he can only see dimly in the future.

This is why sin is so foolish—it either brings death, if we are not a child of God, or discipline if we are. Because when we sin as His children we are telling God in effect that we are not mature, that we have not learned to distinguish right from wrong, that we are still living toddler-like selfish lives, and that we still have a lot of growing up to do. And because He loves us, He will not let us stay there. So we are beaten with a rod of our own making, but one which is administered for our good.

III. THE ANGUISH EXCHANGED, vv. 12,13

So what do we do when our heart is full of distress of this flavor? When we've been broken by the discipline of God and realized the frailty of our lives? We come to Him in prayer. We exchange our anxiety for His understanding, our tiny perspective for His wisdom. That's what David did. He started the process in v. 7, "My hope is in you." I used to put my hope in riches or honor, in wisdom and experience and my gifts, that's what I used to trust in, until you taught me otherwise, through the school of hard knocks. And now my hope is in you alone.

He carries this prayer on in v. 12 and asks God to give ear to his cry and not to hold His peace at his tears, or, as the NIV says, not to be deaf to my weeping. He does what he advocates in Ps. 62:8, *"Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."* He banks on the love of God to listen to the cry of His child, to help him or her make sense of what is happening to them, and to get God's perspective on the limitations of life. He

doesn't ask that God would change the circumstances of his life, but that he would have God's perspective on those circumstances and learn from them.

And yet even in his concluding prayer, there's a sense that his soul is not yet at peace with God, for he says I am a sojourner with you, he feels like a guest with God and not a son. Then he makes a strange request in the final verse, to look away from him that he might smile once more. How ironic, that the God to whom he is turning for solace is the very God who has dealt with him so harshly that he felt it would be better if God just didn't pay any attention to him anymore. So he asks God to take His disciplining gaze away. He is our only hope and yet His focus on us consumes us. At that point, David was depressed like Job who said to God, *"Turn away from me so I can have a moment's joy."* (10:20) or when he said *"Leave me alone. . .what is man that you give him so much attention. . .will you never look away from me or let me alone even for an instant."* (7:16-20) When we can see no more than death and ask no more than respite, we are in good company. God understands, and if we will confess our sins He will deliver us from them (v. 8) through the blood of Christ, and look again on us with a smiling face.

You may be wondering from v. 13 if David didn't know about going to heaven? In his anguish it now feels like when he dies that will be the end. God knows how men speak when they are desperate. But in his heart of hearts, David knows better, as he describes in Ps. 16 (10) and 17 (15), where he says he knows that God will not abandon his soul to the grave and that when he awakes he will be satisfied with seeing God's face.

APPLICATION

So what do we make of this Psalm for our lives today? How should we respond to its lessons? It's interesting that David doesn't give many solutions to the questions he's struggling with. Part of that was due to the fact that he was in the midst of the struggle at the time and really couldn't get above it. And part of it is that now with the fuller revelation of the NT we have a deeper understanding of these issues—and a greater responsibility to respond accordingly. So we will need to dip into the NT to work out what our response should be.

1. Because life is fragile, because time is so short, we need to **evaluate our schedules**. We need to pray David's prayer, Lord show me the measure of my days, and what Moses prayed in Ps. 90 (12), *"Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."* What does it mean to number our days? It doesn't just mean to count them off like with a clicker, one, two. I just got past 20,000. The question is not how many, it's what we're doing with them. It's doing what Paul challenges us to do in Eph. 5:15, 16 *"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."* **DON'T WASTE YOUR LIFE!**

So, how are you using your time? Look at your rat race and see where the time is going. I would suggest that if the usage of your time revolves exclusively around the provision of your

needs and the needs of your family, you are falling short of how God wants you to use your time. There must be space for service, something you're doing for others. Paul says in 1 Cor. 3:10-15 that one day our work, the sum total of our life's efforts, will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. Do you know how? It's all going to be tossed into the fire, and the fire will tell. If what we have built survives God's testing fire, we will receive our reward. If it is burned up, we will suffer loss. We will still be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

I'm not suggesting that what you do by being a testimony for Christ at your workplace or in your neighborhood, or what you do by pouring your life into precious little children at home is in any way insignificant. These are things God has called most of us to and they are very important. What I am wondering about is, and what I think this text would ask of us, is how we are using the rest of our time. Yes, we need some time for leisure, for family, for recreation and refreshment. But are you wasting some of your days. For me the temptation is sports. For others it might be Facebook or video games or shopping or whatever. At the end of the day, end of the month, end of the year, at end of your life, you will have two stacks of thing, one that you did for yourself, the other what you did for others, which will you want to give Jesus on that Day?

Let me suggest 3 opportunities for service, if you are not currently engaged. Stop by the local outreach table and learn about Whiz Kids, how you can help tutor an inner city child in Brookside; Spring Hill Day Camp for kids in the Brookside Neighborhood; or the FISH table, connect with int'l students at U of Indy.

2. Because money is fleeting, we need to **invest it wisely**. Now if the first thing you think about when I say that is I need to find a higher performing stock, you've missed the point. No matter how much interest you earn in an earthly bank or how high your dividends are, it's all still just Confederate money. Even if it doesn't sprout wings, it's soon going to be worth nothing at all. So what do you do with it? You send it on ahead.

That of course is exactly what Jesus told His followers to do in Mt. 6 (19-21), *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* Invest it in the Bank of Heaven, where your rewards will last for all eternity. Jesus said clearly, *"Use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings"* (Lk. 16:9). Use it for ministry. Many of you are doing that, giving to church, MEP, missions. That's wise. If, as you evaluate your investments, you sense that you would like to send a little more ahead, 3 sponsorship programs with 3 of our global strategic partners, K-12 in Nicaragua, bachelor's level training in Ukraine, master's students in Kenya.

Not only that, but you don't want to get caught holding the bag. Listen to what God says through James (5:1-5), *"Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. Your wealth has rotted and moths have eaten your clothes. Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. . . You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter."*

3. Because sin is foolish and God's discipline is hard, **repent from your sin**. Do we understand that some of the challenges in our lives may be the disciplining hand of the Lord? It might be a financial struggle, where God has been consuming our wealth like a moth. It may be something physical, like David describes in Ps. 32:3,4, *"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer."* Not every hardship in life is God's discipline (the lesson of the book of Job); but for the child of God it might be, and until we recognize it as such we will not be ready to learn from it.

Some of you are either caught in the trap of some habitual sin or you are playing very near the edge of the cliff, and the reason I know is that I'm a human just like you. Satan is prowling around looking for someone to devour, and he's got some of you. You can't seem to shake it and maybe God has struck you with a blow and you have felt the hostility of His hand. God is calling you to something better, and He will forgive you and heal you and give you victory if you will turn from your sin and turn to Christ for power. *"Do not be like the horse or mule which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you"* (Ps. 32:9).

"Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds" (Hos. 6:1).

"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit" (Ps. 32:1,2).

He will deliver us from our transgressions—and then give us wisdom to invest our time and money wisely.

CONCL: "Show me the measure of my days" John Piper: *"The thought of coming to my old age and saying through tears, 'I've wasted it! I've wasted it! Was a fearful and horrible thought to me."*

Only One Life

Two little lines I heard one day, Traveling along life's busy way;
Bringing conviction to my heart, And from my mind would not depart;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Soon will its fleeting hours be done;
 Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet, And stand before His Judgment seat;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice, Gently pleads for a better choice
 Bidding me selfish aims to leave, And to God's holy will to cleave;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years, Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;
 Each with its clays I must fulfill, living for self or in His will;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore, When Satan would a victory score;
 When self would seek to have its way, Then help me Lord with joy to say;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Give me Father, a purpose deep, In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;
 Faithful and true what e'er the strife, Pleasing Thee in my daily life;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn, And from the world now let me turn;
 Living for Thee, and Thee alone, Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one, Now let me say, "Thy will be done";
 And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say 'twas worth it all";
 Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ [will last](#).

[poem written by C.T. Studd – missionary](#)